

standards. Recently, a number of colleagues from both sides of the aisle joined with me to introduce Senate bill 286, legislation to freeze CAFE standards at current levels unless changed by Congress.

There are a host of reasons why this legislation should be adopted, Mr. President. Chief among these: CAFE standards should be frozen so that we may put a stop to the highly inappropriate practice of allowing unelected bureaucrats to set far-reaching policies that have significant effects on the safety and economic well-being of the American people. I believe that such responsibility should lie with this legislature, the body entrusted by our Constitution with the duty to determine whether any proposed policy change is in the best interests of the American people.

Mr. President, in today's Washington Times commentary section, Bruce Bartlett, a senior fellow with the National Center for Policy Analysis, outlines several serious problems with increased CAFE standards. Mr. Bartlett's article illustrates clearly the need for Congress to regain control of CAFE standards and I ask that this article be printed in the RECORD.

The article follows:

[From the Washington Times, Feb. 24, 1997]

#### HIDDEN COSTS OF THE CAFE CAPER

(By Bruce Bartlett)

In 1975, at the height of the energy crisis, Congress passed legislation mandating auto manufacturers to meet corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standards. Each auto company was expected to ensure that the average fuel efficiency for all its new car sales would be at least 18 mpg by 1978. The standard was raised in steps to 27.5 mpg by 1990, where it remains currently. However, the Clinton administration has signaled a desire to raise the CAFE standard, despite mounting evidence that the whole program has been a failure.

The biggest problem with CAFE is that there is virtually no evidence it has reduced aggregate gasoline consumption. It is true that auto fuel efficiency has risen 70 percent since 1973, from 13.3 mpg on average to 22.56 mpg in 1995. However, as the figure indicates, the higher fuel efficiency has simply encouraged people to drive more. The average number of miles driven per year has risen 24 percent since 1980, from 9,141 miles to 11,329 in 1995. Thus, even though the average use now uses just 502 gallons of gasoline per year, compared to 771 gallons in 1973, total fuel consumption has continued to rise.

Another problem with CAFE is that it has led to a loss of auto jobs in the U.S. The reason is that there are separate CAFE standards for domestic and imported autos. This has encouraged domestic auto companies to increase the percentage of foreign parts used in some of their models in order to reclassify them as foreign-made. For example, in 1989 Ford turned two of its least fuel efficiency cars, the Crown Victoria and the Grand Marquis, into "imported" cars by reducing their domestic content from 90 percent to less than 75 percent. This allowed Ford to increase the average fuel economy of its domestically produced cars, where it was having a problem meeting the new CAFE standard, while lowering the average for its imported models, where it had room to spare.

Finally, there is growing evidence that CAFE has been detrimental to safety. To in-

crease fuel efficiency, auto companies have had to produce smaller, lighter cars that are less safe than larger, heavier cars. And auto companies have often had to heavily discount these smaller models in order to increase their sales and lower their average corporate fuel economy. Thus a 1989 study estimated that CAFE standards would cost 2,200 to 3,900 lives over the next 10 years.

Virtually all economists agree that higher gasoline taxes would do a far better job of reducing gasoline consumption than CAFE—assuming there is any real need to do so. At a minimum, there should be no further increase in CAFE standards. •

#### TRIBUTE TO COLIN RIZZIO FOR REVEALING A SAT ERROR

• Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Colin Rizzio for his outstanding math expertise, which led him to uncover an error on the SAT exams. His quick insight has gained much national recognition in the last few weeks including an appearance on "Good Morning America" and on the "Today" show. Colin is a 17-year-old senior at Contoocook Valley Regional High School in New Hampshire. He is an above-average student who kept a cool head under testing conditions. Colin discovered an error which had been overlooked by internal and external math specialists while he was taking the SAT last Columbus Day. He took the time to consider different possibilities the math question offered and revealed the error. Thanks to Colin, the test will now be rescored and students' scores will go up nationwide as the flawed math question has been tossed out.

As a former teacher, I am always heartened by stories of students who go the extra mile for educational integrity. Colin is the type of student who asks "What if?" In this case, his inquisitive nature gained him much notoriety.

It is students like Colin that contribute to the future of the Granite State and I am proud to be his Senator. I congratulate Colin on his outstanding achievement and I wish this exemplary student all the best for his future educational endeavors. •

#### NARCOTICS CERTIFICATION

• Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I wish to discuss an important decision facing the President this week in the fight against drug trafficking: Whether to certify that Mexico and Colombia have taken sufficient steps in the past year in combating the narcotics trade. The choice is important not merely because it affects our bilateral relations with these countries, but also because it will send a broader signal about our seriousness of purpose in the war on drugs.

Of course, there will be other nations whose performance on counter-narcotics will be assessed by the President this week. But when it comes to the narcotics trade, Mexico and Colombia are in a league by themselves—Co-

lombia, as the leading source country for cocaine, and a major source of heroin, and Mexico, as the leading transit country for cocaine, and as a significant source for heroin, methamphetamines, and marijuana. And it is because of their predominance in the narcotics trade that the President's decision becomes a barometer of the U.S. commitment to this effort.

Before discussing my specific views on the Colombian and Mexican cases, however, I want to briefly offer some general observations about the drug certification process.

Just over 10 years ago, in the 1986 omnibus drug bill, the United States began a process of annually certifying the performance of countries which were either a major source of narcotics, or a major transit route for narcotics trafficking. Decertification does not merely carry a stamp of political disapproval. By law, nations decertified are ineligible for most U.S. foreign aid, and the United States is required to vote against loans for such nations in international financial institutions such as the World Bank.

The President has three choices: First, he can certify that a country is fully cooperating with the United States, or is taking adequate steps on its own, to combat the narcotics trade. Second, he can decertify a country—a statement that it has not met that standard. Finally, he can provide a national interest waiver—a statement that the country has not met the standards of the law, but that the U.S. national interest lies in continuing the assistance programs.

Not surprisingly, the nations subject to the scrutiny of the decertification process have not been thrilled with the honor. Indeed, many nations have protested that the United States has no right to challenge their performance on counternarcotics—given that the large demand in this country helps to generate the supply. Other nations perceive the certification process as an effort to shift the blame for our drug problem.

I firmly reject such arguments.

First, while I concede that the demand in the United States for narcotics has contributed to the explosive growth of the drug trade in Latin America in the last two decades, the dramatic increase in the power of the narcotics cartels—particularly in Colombia and Mexico—cannot be blamed upon the United States alone. The nations themselves must bear responsibility for their own neglect—for failing to take effective action against vast criminal enterprises which arose before their eyes.

Of course, the United States must do its part to combat the drug problem. Over the past decade, we have. For example, we have steadily increased both our financial resources and our political commitment to combating the narcotics trade. We now spend \$16 billion annually on our national drug program, as compared to \$4.7 billion a decade ago. We have devised a national